



# RISK NZ

## WELCOME TO THE RISK NZ LUNCHTIME SEMINAR SERIES 2019

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# **Managing the risks posed by stressed employees**

Presented by Tony Yuile

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## **The Risks**

That the behaviour of one or more stressed employees will have a negative impact on the achievement of one or more of the organisation's objectives.

Non compliance with the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992.

# Consequences

Impact of employee stress risk on the organisation:

- Non-compliance with HSE
- increased staff turnover
- increased sickness absence
- lost productivity (presenteeism)
- increased rates of accident and injury
- increased workplace conflict
- degraded organisational performance
- poor employee relations and disputes
- damaged brand/reputation/goodwill
- problems with recruitment and retention



## Financial cost

- Workplace absence cost the NZ economy an estimated \$1.51 billion in 2016.
- UK research estimates annual cost to employers of each stressed employee is £1,300 (approx. NZ\$2,500)

# Likelihood

*inevitable*

*certain*

*probable, likely*

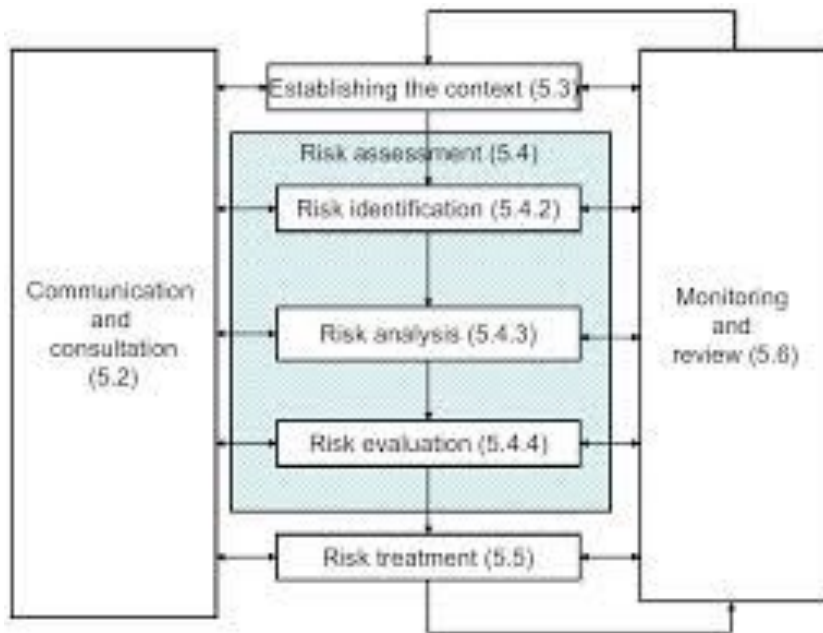
*possible*

*unlikely*

*impossible*

- The NZ Wellness in the Workplace Survey 2017 revealed a marked **increase in workplace stress (22.9%)** over the previous two years and noted that level had been trending upwards over the last two surveys. The larger the business the greater the number of stressed employees.
- A variety of different surveys conducted by different organizations find that **30% to 40% of people** report that their jobs are very, or extremely stressful.
- The UK mental health charity Mind reports that at any point in time, **1 in 6** workers are dealing with mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, or depression.
- A European opinion poll conducted by EU-OSHA shows that **about a half** of workers consider work-related stress to be common in their workplace.

# What is stress and what causes it?



## The S.T.R.E.S.S Process

How we experience stress & anxiety



Our inbuilt risk management process

# A perceived threat to our emotional needs results in stress



***“Stress is what arises when something you care about is at stake.”***  
**~ Kelly McGonigal**



# Work related stress

***The stress we experience in response to a perceived threat (in the work environment) to one or more of our physical and/or emotional needs.***

***"Work-related stress is personal and idiosyncratic. It is almost impossible to predict who will suffer stress and when, but it is possible to predict the context in which stress amongst people at work is likely to occur."***

***~ Professor Derek Mowbray PhD., CPsychol., CSci., FIHM.***

# Risk Identification

1. Identify common work-related stressors.
2. Identify employees who may be at risk of suffering from stress.
3. Identify employees who are currently stressed.

The New Zealand Workplace Barometer  
contact Zoe Port from the Massey Business School  
on [Z.Port@massey.ac.nz](mailto:Z.Port@massey.ac.nz).



# Identifying common stressors

Using available information sources:

- Sickness absence data
- Productivity data
- Quality data
- Staff turnover rates
- Performance appraisal
- Team meetings
- Informal talks to staff
- Staff well-being surveys
- Focus groups
- Data from the organisations EAP provider



**Remember a STRESSOR is a situation/event/person that we perceive to be a threat to one or more of our physical and/or emotional needs.**

# Common work related stressors

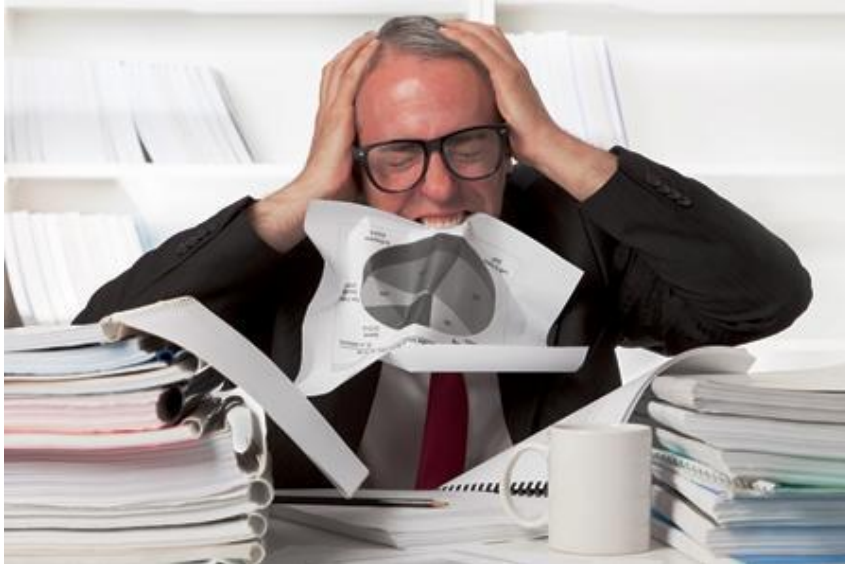


- Excessive pressure
- Lack of autonomy
- Lack of social support
- Relationship conflicts
- Lack of role clarity
- Organisational change
- Management style

# Identifying 'at risk' employees



# Identifying a stressed employee



The signs/symptoms:

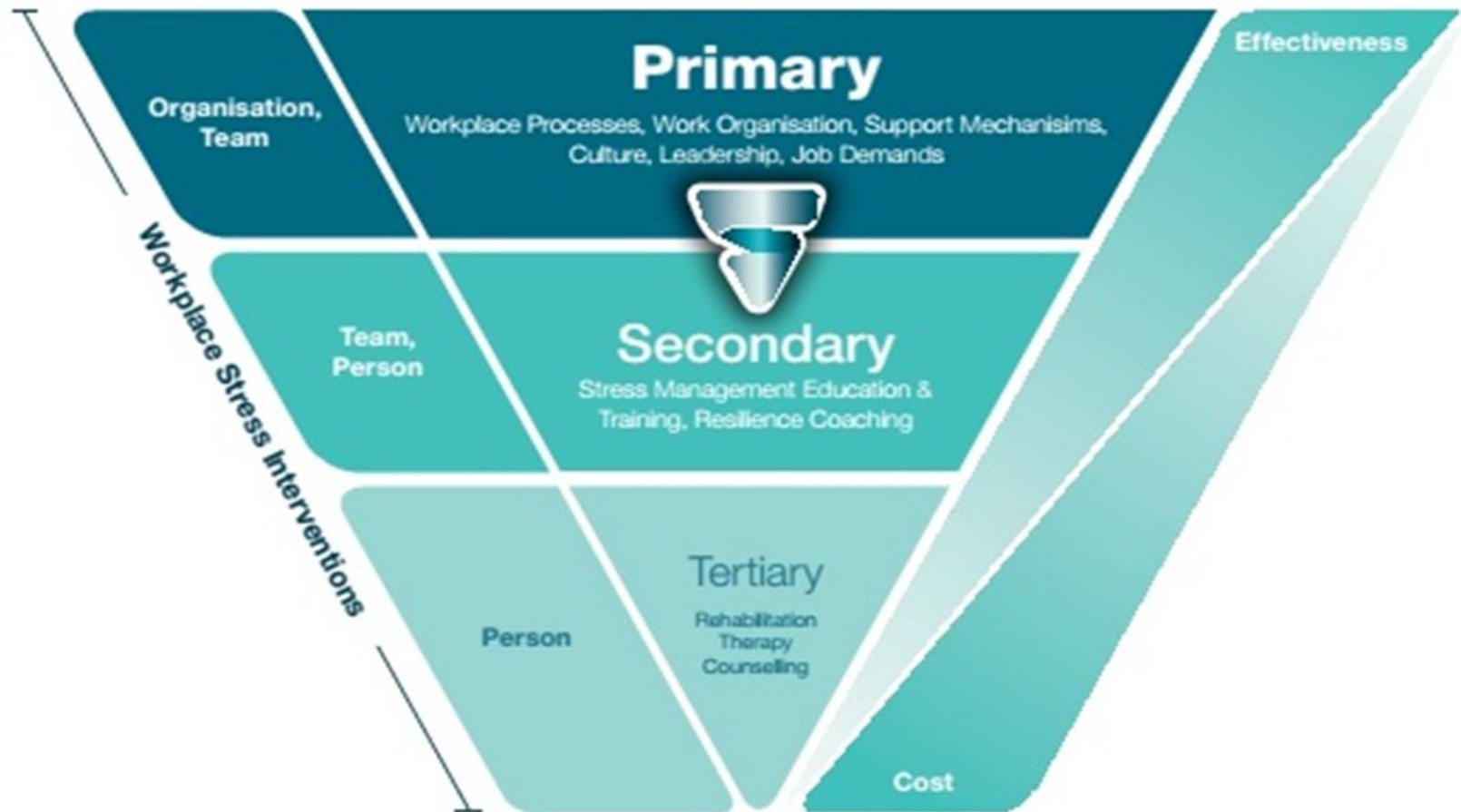
- Cognitive
- Physical
- Emotional

These symptoms combined, influence/drive behaviour such as absenteeism, presenteeism, reduced productivity.

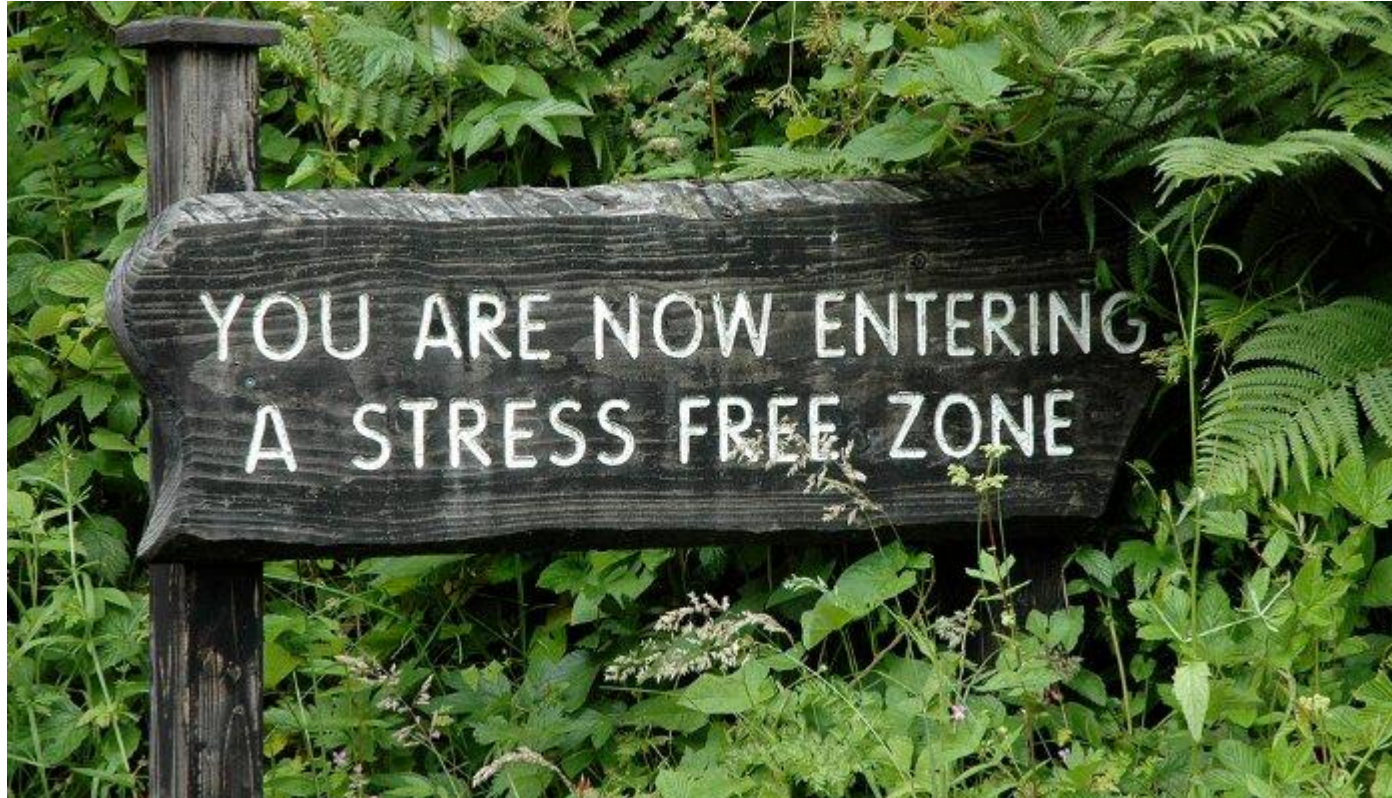


# Risk Treatment

Stress Management Institute®  
Preventing and Managing Workplace Stress



# Primary-level interventions

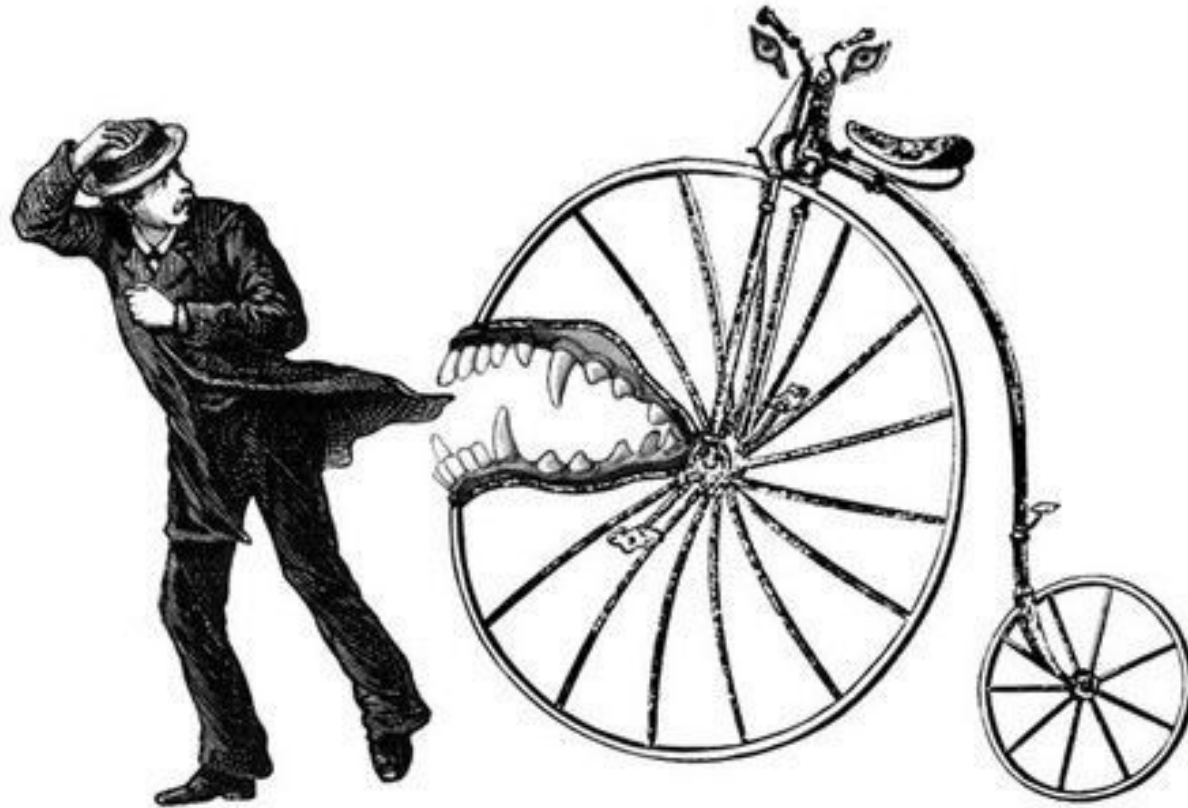


***“From a purely economic perspective, there are clear benefits to supporting positive mental wellbeing, including enhanced productivity.”***

**~ Jacinda Ardern (Jan 2019)**



# Non-work related stress



A VICIOUS CYCLE

# Secondary-level interventions



# Tertiary-level interventions



# Evaluation of interventions



# Summary

1. Stress is something we all experience.
2. At any point in time 1 in 6 people are experiencing stress.
3. Stress is experienced in response to a perceived threat to our needs. When that perceived threat is in the work environment – the stress is called work-related stress (or workplace stress, or occupational stress).
4. For many people the workplace provides the main opportunity for them to meet their needs. It therefore is a major source of perceived threat.
5. Stressed employees pose a significant risk to an organisation. The behaviour of stressed employees can adversely impact the achievement of financial and non-financial objectives.
6. A comprehensive employee stress risk management plan should focus on removing work-related common stressors from the work environment, and helping employees to enhance their individual stress management capabilities and coping skills.
7. Research shows that an effective stress risk management plan can deliver significant business benefits , including cost savings and an enhanced reputation as an employer of choice.

# Questions



# REFERENCES

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2. Health and Safety Executive: **Tackling work-related stress using the Management Standards approach - A step-by-step workbook** (published 03/17)
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5. CIPD: **Building the business case for managing stress in the workplace**
6. Safe Work Australia: **Work-related psychological health and safety** (January 2019)
7. UK HSE: **Management Standards and guidelines on work-related stress for employers and employees and their representatives** (available at [www.hse.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress))





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